



# Police talk man from Clark Bridge early Thursday morning

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ALTON - Just after midnight, a man on a bicycle hopped over the railing of the Clark Bridge and threatened to jump.

While it is not known at this time why the man was threatening that action, officers from the Alton Police Department spent more than an hour on the bridge talking him out of making a tragic mistake. Eventually, officers were successful, and the man was taken for treatment to an area hospital.

"The bridge incident last night was officers doing an excellent job and helping someone in the midst of a crisis," Alton Public Information Officer Emily Hejna said Thursday afternoon.

With several celebrity suicides in the news and news from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) announcing suicide rates in the United States have risen more than 30 percent for people above the age of 10 in recent years, mental health awareness and suicide prevention have become increasingly important.

Here is a comprehensive list of what to look for in a friend, family member or even a complete stranger relating to the possibility of suicidal thoughts:

## *Behavioral Symptoms:*

- Giving away prized possessions
- Talking about death, dying
- Using phrases such as "when I'm gone..." or "I'm going to kill myself"
- Getting affairs in order
- Saying goodbye to loved ones
- Obtaining items needed for suicide attempt

- Decreased social contact
- Increasing drug and alcohol usage
- Withdrawing from once-pleasurable activities
- Increased risky behaviors

#### *Physical Symptoms:*

- Scars or injuries from past suicide attempts
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Chronic and/or terminal illness

#### *Cognitive Symptoms:*

- Preoccupation with death and dying
- Belief that dying by suicide is the only way to end emotional pain

#### *Psychosocial Symptoms:*

- Feeling helpless; trapped by emotional pain
- Psychosis
- Self-loathing
- Hopelessness
- Paranoia
- Intense emotional pain
- Feeling hopeless about a situation
- Mood swings
- Sudden changes in personality
- Severe anxiety and agitation

People who see these behaviors in others are encouraged to help that person seek resources and mental health treatment, but also to reach out to them and ask questions.

Anyone who feels as if they are in the midst of a crisis themselves is asked to call the nationwide Suicide Hotline, which is staffed by caring and trained people. That number is 1-800-273-8255.